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meters, a representative of the State to go along with them. I do not mean to say there is anything wrong now or in the future or in the past but I do know that natural gas is becoming a substantial part of the expenses of our way of life. I also know that many of these large meters are not checked for months and years at a time and I, this pertains to industry and things in that area and a little thing can go wrong. It's true if you misread a meter that only happens until you read it again because obviously you'll probably catch up with it some but I'm talking about the accuracy of the meters and I, I'm not so sure that we should do this and I think it would be--cost a lot of money to check every meter on the house but I think there ought to be some other way by which this State could participate in the checking with the natural gas companies at the time and place they check the meters and I don't want to be disagreeable about it, I only call it to your attention. If you think the bill's alright as it is, I just want to bring that about to your attention.

SPEAKER: Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and Members of the Legislature. This came up at the public hearing. It was discussed at some length and it was the consensus of the hearing that these meters if they go bad, go bad in the same or in favor of the customer. Now that's a new one to me and I was--I had the same question as Senator Carpenter asked and I have the same, the same concern that he voiced about the protection of the individual customer. There seems to be some lack of concern in regard to an individual meter shortchanging an individual customer in favor of the utility company. This is true not only in the case of the natural gas meters but water meters and electricity--electrical meters. We discussed, of course, and there was an amendment on the bill that provided a fee to inspect these meters. I think the fiscal impact if that bill had been carried out by the Department of Agriculture was somewhere around 10 million dollars and so, of course, you see from the practical standpoint, we, we have a real major problem. Now I think Senator Carpenter has testified--need to be explored and that is the spot checking and, and cooperation with the utility companies and they tell me this goes on now, that perhaps we should at some time take a look to see that this is carried out because if you were to have just a small variation as he has pointed out, in the, in the accuracy of these meters it could very drastically affect the, affect the revenue of the company, but at this time and as a result of the public hearing, I would agree with Senator Stromer that his amendment is in order.

SPEAKER: Is there any--Senator Carpenter.

SENATOR CARPENTER: What about--I haven't read your bill--what about electrical meters, measuring electricity, are they exempted, or should they be exempted? Aren't they covered?

SPEAKER: Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: The electrical meters, Senator Carpenter, are exempt the same as the other utility meters.

SENATOR CARPENTER: They've already been taken care of?

SENATOR SCHMIT: That's right.

SENATOR CARPENTER: Well what does this cover then, what, who do we cover?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Under the--under LB 17?

SENATOR CARPENTER: Yeah. We're spending \$150,000 as I read somewhere. Now what are we doing for the \$150,000; who inspects them?